

IAESTE Switzerland Survival Booklet 2012

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1 Welcome to Switzerland

Dear Trainee,

It is great that you have decided to come to Switzerland! You will not regret it! We want you to have a wonderful, interesting, entertaining and breathtaking time in our country. You shall not only gain practical experience at work, but also have a lot of fun during your free time. We have prepared many different activities to give you the opportunity to meet great friends in fantastic surroundings.

To ensure that you enjoy your stay in Switzerland right from the beginning, we have collected some information in this «Survival Booklet». Please read it carefully before you leave your country, especially the chapters «Before I Leave» and «Upon Arrival». If you need more information, don't hesitate to contact us by e-mail, fax or phone. Meanwhile we wish you a lot of fun reading the following pages and look forward to welcoming you to Switzerland.

IAESTE Switzerland

1.1 Some Information about IAESTE

Imagine the time after 1945: Large parts of the earth were torn into pieces, but people hoped to build a better and more peaceful world. In this spirit, the United Nations and other international organizations were founded. In 1948, IAESTE was created to provide students with technical experience abroad and to promote international understanding and goodwill among the students of all nations.

IAESTE has members in more than 85 countries and to date has exchanged over 330'000 students from all over the world. Approximately 5'000 students per year experience IAESTE trainee-ships worldwide.

IAESTE's exchange principle is that every participating country receives a trainee job abroad for every job it can offer at home.

1.2 IAESTE National Office (NO)

In Switzerland, the Swiss National Office organizes the exchange. The National Office sends all the forms, applies for your work permit and handles the international communication. It is located in Zurich (address at the end of this booklet).

1.3 IAESTE Local Committees (LCs)

The LCs are responsible for organizing the summer activities and providing information about daily life. If a LC arranges your accommodation, a LC member will also pick you up upon arrival (see 3.1 for details).

Currently, there are three Local Committees: Basel, Lausanne and Zurich. Their members are full of enthusiasm and hope to share this spirit and to make your stay as pleasant as possible. They also organize meetings where you can meet LC members and fellow IAESTE trainees that live around the respective region (see 6.2). If you are staying in a town other than Basel, Lausanne or Zurich, don't worry: You are more than welcome to join the weekly meetings and the other events which take place all over Switzerland.

Keep in mind that the members of LCs do their work as volunteers in their free time and without getting paid for it. Therefore, the LCs highly welcome trainees in Switzerland to volunteer and help organizing the activities.

If you want to contact members of the Local Committees, please refer to 8.2.

1.4 Facts about Switzerland

The origin of the Swiss Confederation goes back to the union of the three Cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden in Central Switzerland in 1291. Today Switzerland consists of 26 cantons. The political system is based on direct democracy and the principle of subsidiarity; we not only elect our parliament, but also decide on changes to the constitution and law. This means that a certain minimum number of voters can demand legislative changes or plebiscites about new laws.

Switzerland is situated in the heart of Europe, surrounded by the EU countries Austria, France, Germany, Italy and the non-EU country Liechtenstein. Its diameter is 220 km (North-South) and 340 km (East-West) resulting in an area of 41'293 km². Because of the mountains, only about 25 percent of this area is productive for the seven million inhabitants of Switzerland.

The topography of the country is too varied to permit a «typical-Swiss» climate. There are three main areas: The Alps, the Swiss plateau, and the Jura.

In the lower-altitude parts of the country (200-600 meters above sea-level) the climate is much the same as elsewhere in Central Europe. The average temperature in summer is 20 degrees Celsius, with extremes ranging from about 10 to 30 or more degrees. In winter, the average temperatures are around the freezing point with extremes (seldom exceeded) between +10 and -10 degrees Celsius. Temperatures can be considerably cooler at higher altitudes. Summers can be rainy, so you may need an umbrella and/or a raincoat. The typical wind is a dry, warm wind known as «Föhn», which blows from the alpine valleys under certain weather conditions.

The Alps are the natural frontier between the Central European and the Mediterranean climate. Therefore, there are often significant differences between the weather on the Northern and the Southern side of the Alps. Sometimes, weather changes within 20 kilometres from 25°C with sunshine to 10°C with rain. (www.meteo.ch)

There are four different language regions in Switzerland. Swiss-German is spoken in the North and Northeast, French in the West and Southwest, Italian in the South and Rhaeto-Romanic in the Southeast. If you stay in the German speaking part of Switzerland, you will notice that the dialect spoken differs considerably from standard German. If you don't understand someone, and if you understand German, ask him or her to speak «Hochdeutsch» (High German). High German is used as the written language in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. You might want to learn some Swiss-German in order to understand the Swiss mentality better (e.g. at Migros Klubschule or a university). However, it is neither absolutely necessary nor easy.

If you want to know more about Switzerland have a look at the list of links on www.iaeste.ch/Trainees/Info/

The living costs in Switzerland are among the highest worldwide. As of March this year the prices for the following items were approximately as follows:

Food item	Quantity	CHF
Milk	1 litre	1.40
Orange Juice	1 litre	2.50
Butter	250 g	3.00
Bread	500 g	3.00
Eggs	6	3.50
Cheese	250 g	5.50
Ham	250 g	7.00
Tomatoes	1 kg	5.00
Beer	6 x 0.33l	8.00
Wine	0.7 litre	from 7.00 onwards (Well, it depends.)

Transportation in Zürich	24-hour ticket on public transportation system	8 CHF (2nd class, without 1/2 Abo) (also see 4.1)
Movies	Mondays 12 to 13 CHF, other days 15 to 20 CHF	
Swimming	7 CHF	
Disco Entrance fee	15 to 35 CHF	
Pub/Bar	Beer 3 to 7 CHF	
Alcoholic drink	10 to 15 CHF	

Approximate exchange rates (March 2011)

1 CHF = 1.03 USD

1 CHF = 0.77 EUR

1 CHF = 0.65 GBP

1 CHF = 85.50 JPY

Rates of the day <http://money.cnn.com/markets/currencies/>

2 Before You Leave Your Country

Read the following chapter carefully!

2.1 Bureaucracy

Make sure you return the form N/5b «Confirmation of Acceptance», to the IAESTE National Office in your country within two weeks. If you fail to do this, the preparations for your stay in Switzerland will be delayed (see chapter 2.5 / *you might not be required to fill in the form in case IAESTE is only in charge of **visa service** for you*).

VISA

Students with a valid passport from an EU / EFTA member country or Japan (or Malaysia or Singapore) do not need a visa to enter Switzerland.

Citizens of ALL OTHER countries need a visa to enter Switzerland in order to conduct an internship (also in case of countries who's citizens do not need a visa when travelling as tourists – in order to work, the regulations are different!!)

If you are subject to the obligation to hold a visa, your passport shall be valid at least another three months after the end of your stay in Switzerland.

IAESTE Switzerland applies for your visa and work permit. The authorities need approximately 8 to 10 weeks to approve the application and authorize the Swiss Embassy or Consulate in your country to issue the visa. IAESTE Switzerland informs the IAESTE office in your country when this has been done. You can then contact the Swiss Embassy or nearest Consulate in your country to check about how to pick up your visa. Don't forget to take your passport, when you go there!

WORK PERMIT

For students from countries that need a visa: IAESTE Switzerland applies for visa and work permit at the same time.

For citizens of Rumania, Bulgaria, Japan, Malaysia or Singapore: IAESTE Switzerland applies for your work permit. IAESTE Switzerland is starting this process as soon as you have been accepted by the employer. The work permit will be sent to the company who will either send this document to you or you will get it on your first day of work (and only get a copy by email before).

Please check with IAESTE Switzerland if this document has been issued, before travelling to Switzerland – you should bring a copy when travelling.

For EU / EFTA citizens (except Rumania and Bulgaria): If you are doing an internship with a working period of up to 90 days, the work permit consists of an online-registration done by your employer and you do not have to worry about it at all.

If you are staying longer than 90 days you will get the work permit after registration at the local authorities in Switzerland.

The address of your country's embassy or consulate in Switzerland might be useful. There is an informative web site <http://www.eda.admin.ch>. Take a look at what the requirements are before you leave!

During your stay in Switzerland you may wish to travel to neighbouring countries.

Switzerland is now a member of the Schengen agreement. The Swiss visa will enable you to travel to Schengen member countries without any hassle.

Schengen Space:

The Schengen Space is the territory constituted by the countries that are members of the Schengen Agreement: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Poland, and Portugal. The aim of the agreement is to allow free circulation of people within the territory of the member countries.

2.2 Health and Insurance Issues! Important!

2.2.1 Mandatory Health Insurance Coverage

The Swiss law on health insurance (KVG) requires that **every person living in Switzerland has to take out Swiss health insurance** covering medical treatment and hospital costs in case of illness. The Cantonal authorities check the insurance coverage of each person.

EU citizens holding a European Health Insurance Card are sufficiently insured. However, we recommend checking if their insurance coverage is according to Swiss standards. For trainees from the EU-8 states, Bulgaria, Romania or from Non-EU countries we recommend that you take out health insurance with SWISSCARE. As this is a private insurance provider SWISSCARE is not accepted in all cantons. For Trainees who live in the canton of Aargau, Neuenburg or Tessin we recommend that you compare different insurance plans at www.comparis.ch.

IMPORTANT: Please note that it is your responsibility to take care that you are properly insured. Neither IAESTE nor the employer can be held responsible for any costs incurred due to lack of or inappropriate insurance coverage.

If you are under medical treatment and/or have to take special medicines, do not forget to bring them along or ask your doctor whether they are available in Switzerland.

2.2.2 Mandatory Accident Insurance Coverage

Most Swiss companies provide you with compulsory accident insurance, from which you cannot be exempted. The company is entitled to deduct the premium of 0.72% from your salary. This also covers accidents outside working hours and insures continued payment in case of incapacity due to an accident (but not illness).

2.2.3 Mandatory Retirement Insurance (AHV) Coverage and Pension Fund (BVG)

According to the law, the company automatically deducts from your salary 6.3% retirement insurance contribution (AHV) and 1% risk insurance (death and invalidity). We have in vain tried to exempt trainees from this law.

2.2.4 Liability Insurance Coverage

IAESTE Switzerland recommends having a liability Insurance. We set up collaboration with an insurance company who offers a tailored solution especially for our trainees: <http://www.iaeste.ch/Trainees/GeneralInfo/Insurance/>

2.3 Vaccinations

No vaccinations are required for entry into Switzerland.

2.4 Finance

Your salary will usually be sufficient to meet the costs of living for one person but not necessarily to cover extra expenses. In Switzerland, you have to pay the rent in advance at the beginning of each month. At the same time, you will probably also have to pay a security deposit (usually up to one month rent). The salary however, is only paid at the end of the month. Therefore make sure that you have access to enough money (cash, credit card or bank account) until you get your first pay. Don't forget to read 5.1 about the bank and money system in Switzerland, especially regarding the withdrawal of cash with foreign credit or debit cards, prior to your departure. If, for any reason, you do not have enough money at the beginning of your stay, ask your company to give you an advance payment.

There are no currency restrictions about entering Switzerland with cash.

2.5 Accommodation

Normally the LC or the company arranges your accommodation (i.e., student houses, company houses, private rooms, shared flats, etc).

*If IAESTE is only in charge of **visa service** for you, then you might have to find your own accommodation. Make sure you sort out your accommodation well in advance. It can be difficult to find a reasonable accommodation. Ask your employer if he will arrange your accommodation (i.e., student houses, company houses, private rooms and flats, etc.). IAESTE Switzerland cannot provide accommodation in these cases!*

You will have to pay the rent in advance (300 to 700 CHF a month) and usually a deposit in the same amount. You should bring at least 1500 CHF to cover your expenses for the first month here.

If you want to move to another accommodation, other the one you have been assigned to, keep in mind that generally you have to take care of everything by yourself. Don't forget that you **MUST** also inform the IAESTE office of your new address.

Before moving out, you must always give advance notice to your landlord as mentioned in your contract. Otherwise, you will have to pay the rent until the end of your lease.

2.6 Don't Forget

Passport (visa if necessary)

IAESTE papers

Passport photos

Enough money, credit card (You'll receive your salary at the end of the month only, and you have to pay a lot before your pay day)

Tickets (plane, train, etc.)

Special medicines
Sleeping bag (necessary for most of the weekend activities)
Warm clothes
Good shoes (e.g. hiking shoes)
Raincoat, umbrella
Travel guide
International student identity card
Adapter for your electrical equipment (230 V, 50 Hz, Swiss plug; see 5.2)
Your country identity and symbols (flag, t-shirt, food, drinks, etc.)

Make your own checklist!

3 Upon Arrival

3.1 Your Arrival in Switzerland

You can enter Switzerland by plane, train, bus or car. To decide what kind of transportation you want to use, read the chapter about travelling (4). It is probably cheaper to buy a return ticket in your own country. Switzerland has three international airports: Zurich, Geneva and Basel-Mulhouse. Check which one is closest to the place where you are going to stay.

Before leaving your country, you must also know:

- Where you will be staying
- Whether somebody will pick you up or if you need to find the way yourself

Refer to «Form O» of the IAESTE documents. Find out who is arranging your accommodation (company, LC Basel, LC Lausanne, LC Zurich). If this document is missing, please contact the IAESTE office in your country as soon as possible.

When planning your trip, please be aware of the following: **Try not to arrive during the weekend or very late at night** because at these times

- Keys for your accommodation might not be obtainable and
- The National Office cannot be reached in case of problems.

In addition, consider that nearly all shops close on Saturday in the late afternoon and only reopen on Monday morning.

3.1.1 If Your Accommodation is provided by the Company or by yourself

Please ask the company for all the details (address and whether somebody will meet you) or arrange directly with the landlord how you will get your keys. Inform them at what time you expect to arrive at your accommodation and make sure that somebody will be there to let you in.

Don't forget to write down the address of your accommodation. Before you leave try to find out how you will get to your accommodation.

If you cannot arrive at the agreed time (flight delay, missed the train, traffic jam) or in case of other problems, make sure to call your employer and/or your landlord as soon as possible. In order to use public phones you need a Swiss telephone card («Taxcard») which you can buy at any «Kiosk» (if you are already at the Meeting Point at the train station, a «Kiosk» is only a few meters away). Some public phones also accept credit cards. If you have a GSM mobile phone in your home country, contact your GSM provider before you leave to find out whether it works in Switzerland or not. Please also refer to 5.4 for details on how to make phone calls.

3.1.2 If Your Accommodation is provided by a Local Committee (LC)

The Accommodation Service team is responsible for organizing your housing. The responsible person of the team will contact you by e-mail as soon as your accommodation has been organized.

The Accommodation Service team will also send a member (your tutor) to pick you up at the agreed meeting point. Your tutor will help you to buy the most suitable monthly public transportation ticket, accompany you to your accommodation after your arrival and will also give you the most important information you need to know. You can also refer to your tutor or any other member of the LC for any questions you might encounter during your stay in Switzerland.

If you cannot receive e-mails or have not heard from the Accommodation Service 10 days before your departure, contact the Swiss IAESTE National Office in Zurich and the responsible Accommodation Service team.

The contact information for the National Office is in 8.1 whereas the best and fastest way to contact the Accommodation Service team is by e-mail:

accommodation@lczurich.iaeste.ch

accommodation@lcbasel.iaeste.ch

accommodation@lclausanne.iaeste.ch

Follow the standard instructions given hereafter for the specific Accommodation Service team that organised your accommodation:

In any case, contact your tutor and confirm the meeting time and place before leaving your country.

The **Accommodation Service Zurich** has the following standard procedure:

Plane*: Buy a one-way train ticket from Zurich Airport («Zürich Flughafen») to Zurich main station (Zürich HB «Hauptbahnhof»). Go to the Meeting Point (indicated by a blue symbol with a dot in the middle and four arrows pointing towards it) under the big clock in the main hall of the station. Your Tutor will meet you there 1.5 hours after the landing time of your plane. The train ticket from Zurich Airport to Zurich main station costs about 8 CHF in 2nd class.

*Some tutors would like to meet you at the airport. Please make sure you communicate well with your tutor about where and when you will be meeting.

Train: Your train arrives at Zurich main station. Meet your tutor 15 minutes after your scheduled arrival time at the Meeting Point at Zürich HB mentioned above.

Bus: Your bus arrives at the bus terminal at «Limmatstrasse» at the back of Zurich main train station. Go to the Meeting Point at the main train station mentioned above and meet your tutor. Agree on a meeting time with your tutor before you leave.

Car: Please contact the Accommodation Service to arrange an appropriate meeting point and time.

If you cannot arrive at the agreed time (flight delay, missed the train, traffic jam) or in case of other problems, make sure to call your tutor and inform him/her as soon as possible. In order to use public phones you need a Swiss telephone card («Taxcard») which you can buy at any «Kiosk» (if you are already at the Meeting Point at the train station, a «Kiosk» is only a few meters away). Some public phones also accept credit cards. If you have a GSM mobile phone in your home country, contact your GSM provider before you leave to find out whether it works in Switzerland or not. Please also refer to 5.4 for details on how to make phone calls.

The **Accommodation Service Basel** has the following standard procedure:

Arriving by plane in Zurich: Contact your tutor and tell him when you'll arrive at the airport. He will suggest you a train to Basel SBB. This way the tutor knows with which train you will arrive and he will meet you on the platform.

The train ticket costs around 30 CHF (without Halbtax). Think about buying a Halbtax-ticket. This way you'll save money right from the beginning of your stay (see 4.1.1).

Arriving by plane in Mulhouse (Basel Airport):

Leave the airport through the right exit! There are two. One goes to France and one goes to Switzerland. Go to Switzerland! Your tutor will pick you up where you leave the restricted airport area.

Train: Your train arrives at Basel SBB. Meet your tutor on the platform

Car: Please contact the Accommodation Service to arrange an appropriate meeting point and time.

If you cannot arrive at the agreed time (flight delay, missed the train, traffic jam) or in case of other problems, make sure to call your tutor and inform him/her as soon as possible. In order to use public phones you need a Swiss telephone card («Taxcard») which you can buy at any «Kiosk». Some public phones also accept credit cards. If you have a GSM mobile phone in your home country, contact your GSM provider before you leave to find out whether it works in Switzerland or not. Please also refer to 5.4 for details on how to make phone calls.

The Accommodation Service **Lausanne** has the following standard procedure:

Arriving by plane in Geneva (or Zurich): Contact your tutor and tell him when you'll arrive at the airport. He will suggest you a train to Lausanne CFF. This way the tutor knows with which train you will arrive and he will meet you on the platform.

The train ticket costs around 21 CHF (without Halbtax) from Geneva Airport (67 CHF from Zurich). Think about buying a Halbtax ticket. This way you'll save money right from the beginning of your stay (see 4.1.1).

Train: Your train arrives at Lausanne CFF. Meet your tutor on the platform

Car: Please contact the Accommodation Service to arrange an appropriate meeting point and time.

If you cannot arrive at the agreed time (flight delay, missed the train, traffic jam) or in case of other problems, make sure to call your tutor and inform him/her as soon as possible. In order to use public phones you need a Swiss telephone card («Taxcard») which you can buy at any «Kiosk». Some public phones also accept credit cards. If you have a GSM mobile phone in your home country, contact your GSM provider before you leave to find out whether it works in Switzerland or not. Please also refer to 5.4 for details on how to make phone calls.

In case you cannot reach your tutor, you can call the IAESTE National Office (see 8.1; during office hours only).

In case you cannot reach your tutor, you can call the IAESTE National Office (see 8.1; during office hours only).

3.2 Registration

Important: as a rule, everyone living in Switzerland needs to register with the local authorities.

There are exceptions for short stays up to 4 months (If you are staying for more than 4 months please **continue at *Registration**):

- EU / EFTA citizens (except Rumania and Bulgaria) staying for less than 90 working days do not have to register with the authorities in person (in this case the employer registers the student online in advance)
- In many cases of other citizens staying for less than 4 months no registration is needed either. If you do NOT have to register, this will be stated on the confirmation document for your visa/work permit: it says «Keine Anmeldung erforderlich» in this case. If it does NOT say so, **continue at *Registration**

***Registration:** The following formalities must be fulfilled within one week after your arrival.

(When contacting any Swiss authority, always state that you are an intern, «Praktikant» in German, working under the auspices of IAESTE).

You must go to the local administration office («Einwohnerkontrolle» in German, «Contrôles des habitants» in French or police station) and present your passport, Provisional Residence Permit («Zusicherung der Aufenthaltsbewilligung») or copy of the Authorization to Issue the Visa («Ermächtigung zur Visumserteilung»), and if already available, proof of your health insurance.

After 2-3 weeks you will get your «L-Ausweis», the Swiss passport for foreigners, valid during you stay in Switzerland.

If you live in the city of Zurich, report to the nearest «Kreisbüro». Ask your tutor or your landlord in which «Kreis» you are living. A fee of up to 110 CHF will be charged. If the communal authorities want to keep your passport for the duration of your stay (they are entitled to retain it for a few days), point out that you may need it to travel outside Switzerland.

Kreis	Street	ZIP	Phone
1	Molkenstr. 5/9	8022 Zürich	044 216 36 77
2	Ulmerstr. 1	8002 Zürich	044 201 75 44
3	Zurlindenstr. 87	8036 Zürich	044 462 38 33
4	Hohlstr. 35	8026 Zürich	044 413 69 49
5	Fabrikstr. 3	8031 Zürich	044 271 31 80
6	Weinbergstr. 164	8042 Zürich	044 361 16 25
7	Gemeindestr. 54	8030 Zürich	044 251 52 00
8	Feldeggstr. 60	8034 Zürich	044 383 53 20
9	Lindenplatz 4	8048 Zürich	044 431 18 00
10	Wipkingerplatz 5	8037 Zürich	044 271 07 90
11	Schwamendingenstr. 41	8050 Zürich	044 318 81 50
12	Schwamedingerplatz 1	8051 Zürich	044 325 29 70

If you live in the city of Basel report to
Einwohnerdienste Basel-Stadt, Internationale Kundschaft, Spiegelgasse 6, 4001
Basel
061 267 71 71, <http://www.bdm.bs.ch/>

If you live in the city of Lausanne, report to
Contrôle des habitants, Rue du Port-Franc 18, Rez-de-chaussée, Case postale 5354
1002 Lausanne, Phone +41 21 315 31 33, Email: controle.habitants@lausanne.ch,
<http://www.lausanne.ch/ch>

3.3 Work

Public Holidays (**2012**): January 1st (New Year's Day), April 6th (Good Friday), April 9th (Easter Monday), May 1st (Labor Day, only in some cantons), May 17th (Ascension Day), May 28th (Whit Monday), August 1st (Swiss National Day), December 25th (Christmas Day) and December 26th (Boxing Day). Besides these, each canton has its own off days, depending on its religion and historical background.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_holidays_in_Switzerland

If you plan to start working on May 1st or August 1st, ask your company whether they are working. You should in any case contact the company, inform them of your arrival and ask how to get to your work.

You have agreed to work with the company for a certain period. This period cannot be changed without the agreement of the company and IAESTE. Your training will not only be informative, you are also expected to lend a hand and do some practical work. You cannot expect the company to give you a different task than the one mentioned in the offer. In some cases, the exact task will only be determined after your supervisor has met you and discussed the possibilities. Swiss people work 40 to 42 hours per week, not including a lunch break, and are entitled to 20 days of holiday per year.

Use the very well organized public transportation system to go to work (bus, tram, train). www.sbb.ch (Swiss Railways) or the individual pages of each Canton e.g. www.zvv.ch (Zurich Kanton), www.TNW.ch (Kanton Basel) and www.mobilis-vaud.ch (Canton de Vaud) are very useful websites with precise timetables and costs (also see 4.1)

4. Travelling in and around Switzerland

4.1 By Train and Other Public Transportation

4.1.1 Train

The best way to travel in Switzerland is by train. You arrive right in the center of the cities and you do not have to worry about finding a parking space! There is an excellent network of Intercity, Interregion and other fast trains, connecting most cities in Switzerland. Local trains («Regionalzug») and buses connect smaller towns and remote areas to the larger cities. Zurich, Basel, Bern and Central Switzerland also have an efficient local suburban train network («S-Bahn»). All cities have a good bus network. Zurich, Bern, Genève and Basel also have trams.

Halbtax

If you are planning to participate in the IAESTE weekend trips or if you want to explore Switzerland by train, a half-fare pass («Halbtax-Abo») is most convenient. A Halbtax costs 165 CHF for one year. With this card you pay only half the price for any Swiss train ticket. There are also reductions on urban bus or tram tickets, ships, post buses, some cable cars, etc. To buy a Halbtax-Abo you need to take your passport and a passport photo with you.

Gleis7

If you are 25 or younger, a great deal to travel inside Switzerland is the so-called «Gleis 7» card, valid for one year, which you get at the railway stations for 99 CHF. You need to purchase a one-year Halbtax to be able to buy a Gleis 7 or you can purchase a combicard Gleis 7 + Halbtax for 264 CHF. It is a good deal since it allows

you to travel free on the network of the Swiss National Railways (SBB) and many private railways after 7:00 p.m.

Even if you are staying in Switzerland for only two or three months, it's probably worth it to buy a Halbtax and a Gleis 7 card if you intend to travel. A return ticket from Zurich to Geneva costs 160 CHF without and 80 CHF with Halbtax reduction. If you travel after 7:00 p.m. both ways and have the Gleis 7 card, you would travel for free. Ask at the ticket counter for further details.

At the stations, you can get free timetables for specific destinations or buy the official timetable for all destinations in Switzerland, including post buses. For further questions, inquire at the information desk. If you have access to Internet, information including timetables can be found under www.sbb.ch.

In general, you always need to have the ticket before boarding. The fine costs 80 CHF if you are caught without a ticket. However, you can buy long distance train tickets on the train, for a slightly higher price. On local public transportation, you always need to have the ticket before boarding.

If you are flexible in your travel plans, check for special tickets called «Supersaver ticket» or other offers on www.sbb.ch. The «Supersaver ticket» tickets are available two weeks before departure for a limited number of trains. For example, a Zurich-Geneva trip can cost 18 CHF (one way, with Halbtax-Abo). For similar tickets for Germany (e.g. the «Schönes-Wochenende-Ticket»), check the website of the German Railway: www.bahn.de

The European railway network is well developed, and the train is an excellent way to discover Europe. If you decide to travel to a specific European destination when you are already in Switzerland, tickets are discounted for people under 26. There are direct trains (Eurocity) running from most major European cities to Switzerland. The main border stations are Basel, Schaffhausen, St. Margrethen, Buchs, Chiasso, Brig, Genève and Vallorbe. See the Life & Pleasure section for more leisure travel ideas.

4.1.2 Local Transportation

The Cities and Cantons have excellent public transport systems with regional trains (S-Bahn), buses, trams and boats.

Fares and are based on a system of fare zones. You buy a ticket for one or several zones and then you are entitled to an unlimited number of rides in all directions on all public transportation within the designated zones and period.

You have to buy your ticket at the ticket machine or train station before boarding unless you have a series ticket or a season ticket. If you transport a bike, you need a bicycle ticket. Train station ticket offices, sales offices of city transportation authorities and some post offices and kiosks also sell multiple tickets or monthly tickets.

If you are under 26 a monthly card for local transport system costs between 41 and 53 CHF, depending on the area.

Zurich: www.zvv.ch or www.vbz.ch.

There you will even find an instruction how to buy a ticket from a machine.

Basel: www.bvb-basel.ch and www.TNW.ch

Bern: <http://www.bernmobil.ch>

Lausanne: <http://www.t-l.ch> and <http://www.mobilis-vaud.ch>

Lucerne: www.vbl.ch

You can also find monthly passes for individual cantons.

4.2 By Air

Zurich, Geneva and Basel-Mulhouse are the international airports, while Bern and Agno-Lugano are the regional airports in Switzerland. Ask for special airfares if you are under 26 or have a student ID. www.sta.ch (Student Travel Agency)

Zurich and Geneva airport have a railway station with direct connections to the respective main stations (Zurich Hauptbahnhof, Genève Cornavin). If you go to Winterthur, St. Gallen or Eastern Switzerland, you can also take a direct train from Zurich Airport. In Basel-Mulhouse or other airports buses connect the airport with the railway station.

If you're planning to get a connecting flight to a European city, check the budget airlines. The prices can be very cheap. Be aware of the luggage limit! Most of these companies only offer online bookings. Check their website; you could save a lot of money!

www.swiss.com offers some cheap web specials within Europe published from Wednesday 8.00 until Saturday midnight.

www.easyjet.com

www.germanwings.com

www.skyeurope.net

www.airberlin.com

www.ryanair.com

Offset the environmental impact of emissions (CO₂) from your air travel by purchasing a myclimate ticket: www.myclimate.org

4.3 By Car

A car isn't needed in Switzerland. You can reach all the places you like due to the extensive public transportation network.

However, if you plan to come to Switzerland by car, you must buy a Motorway Sticker (Vignette) for the windscreen (40 CHF) at the border. You must have the insurance «Green Card».

Cars can be rented in Switzerland in many different places:

www.hertz.ch, www.avis.ch, www.europcar.ch, www.sixti.ch (sixti offers really good bargains).

Normally, you must be over 21 and have had the driving license for at least one year.

In order to rent a car by hours check out this service:

<http://mct.sbb.ch/mct/en/reisemarkt/services/mobilitaet/clickdrive.htm>

If you intend to use a car frequently but for short terms, Mobility offers car sharing on self-service basis with more than 1'850 cars located all over Switzerland: www.mobility.ch

The speed limit is 50 km/h in towns and villages, 80 km/h on ordinary roads and 120 km/h on motorways. Recently, more and more residential areas have introduced a speed limit of 30 km/h. The fines for ignoring the speed limits are very high. Every person in the car (in the front and back) must have the seat belts fastened.

The alcohol limit is 0.5 promille and there is no tolerance at all when it comes to drugs.

In March 2011, the per litre gasoline prices were approximately:

Unlead: 1.80 CHF

Diesel: 1.90 CHF

Don't forget your «Ausländerausweis» (Foreigner ID, issued by the local authority in Switzerland), which shows that you are living and working in Switzerland, if you are planning to leave Switzerland by car! This prevents you from troubles at the border!

4.4 By Bike

Switzerland has many biking trails. Bikes can also be rented (information at the travel information centres at the larger railway stations).

Near platform 18 of Zurich Central Station, there is a free bicycle rental, open between 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 p.m. You need to bring your ID and 20 CHF deposit.

For details, take a look at «Züri rollt»: <http://www.zuerirollt.ch/> or

<http://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/content/aoz/de/index/shop/veloverleih/standorte.html>

In Lausanne there is the same service, called «LausanneRoule» in the city center (Place de l'Europe) and in Renens station. For details: www.lausanneroule.ch.

In the Romandie, there is also the service called «VeloPass», existing in several cities. For details: www.velopass.ch

IMPORTANT

If you have a bike in Switzerland, you have to have a bike sticker called «Velo Vignette». This provides you with some insurance and only costs 6.50 CHF. These stickers can be purchased at places like the Post office or the Kiosks.

5 Life and Pleasure in Switzerland

5.1 Bank (Money)

Banks are open from Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. They often are closed during the lunch hour.

In Switzerland, you can open an account at various banks or at a post office. You will need either a bank or a postal account to receive money from your company since your salary is usually not paid in cash. Since bills are often paid through the postal system, a postal account is a good choice.

Generally you need your passport and a document proving your employment in Switzerland or your Swiss residence permit («Kurzaufenthalterausweis L», copy of your registration receipt). Different banks may have different rules regarding the opening of an account by foreigners. Therefore, if you cannot open an account at one bank, you might have to try another bank. Some banks offer their application forms only in German, Italian and French and do not allow to open an account if the person does not speak one of these languages (happened at «Raiffeisen» and «Migrosbank»)

However, all banks generally seem to give you a Maestro card (a debit card, formerly also called EC card) only after having received the salary of three months. This card usually costs about 20 CHF per year.

Swiss ATMs are called «Bancomat» (operated by a bank) or «Postomat» (operated by the Swiss post) and accept Maestro cards from banks or the "Postcard" from the Swiss Post, respectively. Most of them also accept foreign Maestro cards and credit cards (American Express, MasterCard, Visa, etc.). However, be aware that a commission fee may be charged at each withdrawal! Ask the bank which issued the card if you are not sure about cash withdrawal fees.

Accessing your account through the internet will save you a lot of time because you do not need to stand in line at the post office to do your payments.

Generally, an account can also be convenient if your family needs to send you money from home.

5.2 Electricity

Voltage: 230 volts/50 hertz, single phase, for appliances and electrical equipment up to 2,200 watts;

Electric points: Universal plugs type C

5.3 Post

Post offices are open from Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (some are closed for lunch), and on Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.

A letter (up to 100g within Switzerland, up to 20 g to foreign countries) or postcard can be sent either by A-Post (Prioritaire), which takes one day within Switzerland, or B-Post (Non Prioritaire), which takes two to three days within Switzerland and up to some weeks abroad.

	A rate	B rate
Switzerland	1.00 CHF	0.85 CHF
Europe, Mediterranean countries	1.30 CHF	1.20 CHF
Others	1.80 CHF	1.40 CHF

Besides offering the usual postal services, you can also open an account at the post, as described above in 5.1.

5.4 Telephone

There are several companies offering connections as well as prepaid telephone cards. In order to save money, you should compare the offers of different companies (Swisscom, Orange, Sunrise, Tele2). The homepage www.comparis.ch might help you to choose the best solution.

Local Calls:

Calls within Switzerland are cheaper between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. (mobile: 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.) and on weekends. For emergency contact numbers see section 5.9.

International Calls:

First, dial 00, then the country code, followed by the area code (without the first 0 or 9) and finally the local number. Depending on your provider, calls are cheaper between 9 p.m. and 8 a.m. and on weekends. Flash card offers very good prices for international calls. There are available at many locations, including Kiosks.

Public Phones:

Most public phones work with «Taxcard», a few still with coins. You can use any prepaid telephone card on all Swisscom public phones, but some other cards are much cheaper than the «Taxcard» from Swisscom. Telephone cards are available at most kiosks. Read the instructions on the back of the card.

Mobile Phones:

We recommend buying a cheap mobile phone and using a prepaid SIM-card. This involves no fixed monthly cost; you buy special refill tickets in advance for as much money as you want to spend. Migros «M-Budget» and Coop «Prix Garantie» offer some of the best prices. However, the calls are more expensive than at a fixed net telephone or with a special mobile phone contract. A mobile phone contract usually only makes sense if you stay for a longer time and use the phone a lot. In this case you can choose between three providers: Swisscom, Sunrise and Orange. Often, the providers have special offers for young people. For further information: www.mbudget-mobile.ch; www.coop.ch/coopmobile; www.sunrise.ch; www.orange.ch; www.swisscom.ch. www.yallo.ch is a popular deal nowadays. It allows you to call between other people with Yallo for only 0.05 CHF/min.

If you want to use a mobile phone from your own country (when you already have one), make sure it is GSM compliant. This depends on whether or not your phone can operate on the frequency range that the Swiss GSM networks use (some older phones sometimes have problems, for modern phones this is usually not a problem). Mobile phones ("cell phones") from North America often do not work. Inquire at your GSM provider in your home country for details. Depending on which agreements your GSM provider at home has made with the providers in Switzerland, you could also use your mobile phone in Switzerland with your mobile phone number from home. Since the prices per minute are extremely high. However, this is only a recommendable option for emergencies or for the first days after your arrival. Ask your GSM provider from home for details.

Stationary Phones:

If you are staying in Switzerland for more than 6 months, it may be worthwhile to have a phone in your room or apartment. If you have a socket in your room, you just have to sign a contract with a provider. Again it is worth checking out www.comparis.ch. You can either rent a phone with the company you sign the contract or buy a cheap phone in any electric items shop.

5.5 Shopping

On weekdays, shops are usually open from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. (in the center of Zurich to 8 p.m.) On Saturdays, they close either at 4:00 p.m. or at 5:00 p.m. depending on the area. Most shops are closed on Sundays. In suburbs and country towns, some shops close for lunch. In big cities, after-hours shopping is possible at railway stations or at the airport.

Migros, Coop, Denner, Carrefour, Aldi, Lidl are cheap supermarkets and offer most of what you need.

Larger shops accept Swiss bank or postal cards. Credit cards or foreign Maestro cards are sometimes also accepted. Keep in mind that smaller shops only take cash.

Many cities in Switzerland have a garbage system which is financed through a special tax on garbage bags (for example, the «Zürisack» in the Zurich area or «Bebbisack» in Basel). Other garbage bags will not be collected. You find these bags in supermarkets (Migros, Coop, etc.) but not in the shelves! Ask the cashier or customer service for the trash bags in the appropriate size (17 litres, 35 litres...).

5.6 Entertainment

For entertainment, the Local Committee members are the people to ask. They are also very active organising an event program and other activities (see 6). Do not hesitate to contact the LC members or other trainees through the IAESTE e-mail list (see 7.1) when you need tips on what you can do in Switzerland in your spare time! The Local Committees appoint at least one member responsible for the IAESTE event program and all other events.

5.6.1 Private Excursions and Mountain Trips

If you want to organize excursions by yourself, you can find information on www.myswitzerland.com or www.switzerland.com or in tourist offices and bookstores or ask the Local Committees (NOT the National Office). The LCs can give you good tips on where to travel and how to travel for cheap. Also, visit your local train station to speak to an SBB staff and to get brochures for special deals. You can also visit www.railway.ch for special deals.

Switzerland's location in the heart of Western Europe makes it easy to visit a number of countries by train or air. For the most affordable tickets, book at least one month in advance.

Fly: easyjet.com (Geneva, Basel), ryanair.com (Basel), swiss.com (Geneva, Basel, and Zurich)

Train: bahn.de (Germany), oebb.at (Austria), snCF.fr (France), trenitalia.it (Italy)

You probably want to do some hiking or even climbing. For this purpose, it is advisable to join some local people who know the place and its specific conditions. If you go on your own, you should stick to the marked paths and tell your landlord or your employer where you are going and when you expect to be back. Please keep in mind that the weather can dramatically change within an hour, especially if you are in the Alps.

5.6.2 Cinema, Concerts, Opera, Theatre

There are many theatres and cinemas in every city. Programs are published in the local newspaper or at the local tourist information.

In most cities, cinemas are cheaper on Mondays. Check whether they give a student discount (show your student ID or «Legi»).

During summer, there are lots of open-air events like cinemas, theatres, music festivals, etc.

Check out www.ticketcorner.ch and www.goodnews.ch for concert tickets.

5.6.3 Parties

To find out about parties, ask the members of your closest Local Committee, people at the local university, check <http://www.iaeste.ch/Trainees/> and especially read the messages on the e-mail lists where both LC members and other people announce parties (see 7.1). A good website for parties in the Zurich area is <http://www.usgang.ch/>.

5.7 Gastronomy

Restaurants are expensive in Switzerland. If you want to eat in a restaurant, you need to spend at least 15 CHF for a lunch. It is called «Menu», «Tagesmenu» or «Menu du jour» and usually consists of a soup or salad and a main dish. In the evening, meals are more expensive. A main course and beer can cost 30 CHF or more.

The service charge is included, but is still common to give a tip in good restaurants and in the evening.

5.8 Sports and Activities

Universities have good sports facilities (open also during holidays). Ask for the program and conditions. Larger companies also have their own sports clubs.

If you want to do something on your own, you can jog (on special trails called «Vita Parcours» or «Lauftreff»), bike (bike rental for approx. 30 CHF per day - in the city of Zurich there is also a free bike rental see 4.4), swim in a pool, river or lake, play tennis or squash, etc.

5.9 Emergencies, Hospitals, Doctors

Police, emergency call	117
Fire	118
Ambulance, emergency	144
Problems with your car (insert at least 0.60 CHF)	140
Phone number enquiry	1811

6 IAESTE Events

6.1 IAESTE Event Program

IAESTE organizes various events throughout the year. Larger events, usually for two days, take place almost every weekend in summer, when many trainees are around.

Some of the yearly highlights are:

International Party

Hiking Weekend

Ticino Weekend

Visit of a Swiss chocolate factory

Street Parade

River rafting

Lausanne Weekend

Bern Weekend

Wine tasting

Ski week-end

Zermatt Weekend

and many more...

You can see the detailed program on www.iaeste.ch/Trainees/Events/2011/. The page will be updated frequently during the course of the year.

Because the number of participants is usually limited and our events are very popular, each event requires separate registration on a "first come, first served" basis which can be done electronically through our web page.

Changes to the event program, opening of registration and other details will be announced on our trainee e-mail list, so we strongly recommend subscribing to this list if you want to be informed about our activities early enough (see 7.1).

Don't forget to bring some typical food or drink from your country for the International Party!

The event program includes «Industrial Sights» events which usually take place on a Thursday or Friday afternoon. These are tours of interesting or unique companies in Switzerland. The idea is to show you firsthand how different industries operate from what you learn in your study. During an Industrial Sight, trainees attend a presentation and have the opportunity to meet people associated with the respective industry. We encourage everybody to attend!

Remember that these visits are during working hours. Therefore you have to ask your employer for permission to attend these events. You might take holiday time or compensate the hours lost by working more on another day.

The best place to meet other trainees, members of the Local Committees as well as Swiss students and to exchange information and news with them are the «Weekly Meetings» described in 6.2.

6.2 IAESTE Weekly Meetings

Weekly Meetings are organized in Lausanne, Basel and Zurich. They are usually held in a bar. Please find the updated information on our homepage on www.iaeste.ch/Trainees/WeeklyMeetings/.

Zurich

Weekly Meetings in Zurich are announced by the Event Team of LC Zurich on your official mailing list before Thursday. It will also be posted on the front page of our IAESTE Switzerland site, www.iaeste.ch, but it is always the best way to get informed about our Zurich Weekly Meetings by reading the announcements on our e-mail list (see 7.1) which are the most accurate. The LC Zurich wants to offer you an interesting variety, so we seldom meet at the same place every week.

Basel and Lausanne

In Basel and Lausanne there are not fixed weekly meetings due to the lesser number of trainees in these regions, but the LC Basel and LC Lausanne organise different meetings and events for trainees in those areas. For more details, get in contact with our Local Committee in Basel or the Local Committee in Lausanne.

6.3 AIESEC and ESN Events

AIESEC (for management and economics students) have similar aims as IAESTE. If you live in a place with no IAESTE contract group, you may want to contact the closest AIESEC LC for weekly meetings and local activities. To find out more about the AIESEC Local Committees please visit www.aiesec.ch

ESN (Erasmus Student Network) is a European network for exchange students. In particular, the IAESTE LC Zurich cooperates with ESN in Zurich (<http://www.esn.ethz.ch/>) which means that IAESTE trainees are welcome to participate in many events organized by ESN. We will inform you about this through the IAESTE event website and especially through the mailing list (see 7.1).

7. E-mail Communication and IAESTE Website

IAESTE Switzerland and the Local Committees strongly encourage every trainee to have an e-mail address and internet connection in order to facilitate fast and efficient communication and to save paper.

Please let us know your e-mail address where we can contact you during your stay in Switzerland. It can be the e-mail address in your home country or an e-mail address at your company in Switzerland. If you are unable to read e-mails for a longer time, please let IAESTE know about other ways to contact you.

Most trainees have access to the internet at work. Depending on your

accommodation, you may or may not have an internet connection there (through a telephone or cable TV line). Some cities in Switzerland offer free WLAN all over the city (e.g. St. Gallen and Lucerne). There are also internet cafés in all major cities. If you don't have regular access to the internet, try to directly stay in contact with other trainees or the members of the LCs around you in order to be informed. If you decide to subscribe to internet where you live, you can check with some major providers such as Cablecom (TV cable, ca. 45 CHF/month) or Swisscom (telephone line, one year contract).

7.1 How to Subscribe to the Mailing Lists

Note that we have two different e-mail lists:

7.1.1 'Official list'

On the 'official list' *trainees@iaeste.ch* information regarding the event program, the weekly meetings and other 'official' announcements are published. Every trainee should subscribe to this list to receive important information!!!

In order to reach all trainees this list is also open for you. Please send only messages of general interest and in English! For example, your self-introduction should not be posted here.

7.1.2 'Jokes & Gossip List'

The 'Jokes & Gossip List' *swiss-iaeste-trainees@yahoogroups.com* is open for e.g. jokes, arrangements to meet with some limited trainees, for discussions or just about anything else.

Self-introductions should only be sent to this list!

Everyone who is subscribed can send mails through this list.

Note that event program announcements are usually not posted to this list!

This list is a Yahoo! Group. If you do not want to receive each message to this list individually but still want to be informed, you can log in to the group website, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/swiss-iaeste-trainees/> and either browse through the message archive or choose to receive a daily digest with all messages from one day put into a single e-mail to you.

Note that the IAESTE e-mail lists are not moderated.

For technical details about how to subscribe or unsubscribe, how to post a message or how to browse the message archive, please go to

<http://www.iaeste.ch/Trainees/MailingLists>.

Especially for the official e-mail list, make sure that you closely read and follow the instructions given on the website and in the automatic e-mail you will receive when trying to register.

7.2 IAESTE Switzerland Homepage

www.iaeste.ch

It contains information for trainees, companies, students and members. The main page for trainees is www.iaeste.ch/Trainees/ which informs about the event program 2011, weekly meetings and mailing lists.

But there are other important links.

If you want to contact the Local Committee, you will find their members-lists and detailed information on

www.iaeste.ch/Members/LCBasel
www.iaeste.ch/Members/LCLausanne/
www.iaeste.ch/Members/LCZurich/

Every year, IAESTE Switzerland revises and updates the Survival Booklet. Therefore, we greatly appreciate your comments and any new information. Please send them, if possible by e-mail, to incoming@office.iaeste.ch

8 Contact Information

8.1 IAESTE Switzerland (National Office)

Mrs Seraina Munton
Operating Manager/National Secretary

Mr Victor Varga / Mrs Gaby Hilpertshauser
Incoming Students Coordinators

Mrs Sabine Bock
Outgoing Students Coordinator

Address:
IAESTE Switzerland
Weinbergstrasse 41
8006 Zurich

Office hours:
Monday to Friday:
08.30 to 12.00 a.m. and 2.00 to 5.00 p.m.

How to get there:

Tram No. 7 or 15 to Haldenegg. Or coming from Zurich Hauptbahnhof No. 6 or 10 two stops to Haldenegg, in Swiss Engineering Building, Side Entrance (from Sumatrastrasse)

Telephone number:

Incoming Students / Traineeships in Switzerland

Phone: +41 43 244 95 27 or 28

Victor Varga / Gaby Hilpertshauser

Fax: +41 43 244 93 39

E-mail: incoming@office.iaeste.ch

8.2 Local Committees (LCs)

8.2.1. LC Zurich

The LC Zurich has a room in an ETH building but since most members from the LC work from home, you should contact them by e-mail to ask for an appointment.

For accommodation, arrival, pick up, tutoring:

accommodation@lczurich.iaeste.ch

For the IAESTE summer program or other events (questions or if you want to help with the organization) contact: events@lczurich.iaeste.ch

For other matters, to find out more about us and to view a list with our members, please go to: <http://www.iaeste.ch/Members/LCZurich/>

8.2.2 LC Basel

The LC Basel does not have an office. The members work from home. Therefore it's best to contact them by e-mail.

For accommodation, arrival, pick up, tutoring:

accommodation@lcbasel.iaeste.ch

For the IAESTE event program or other events (questions or if you want to help with the organization): president@lcbasel.iaeste.ch

www.iaeste.ch/Members/LCBasel

Address:

IAESTE LC Basel

Universität c/o skuba,

Petersplatz 1, 4003 Basel

8.2.3 LC Lausanne

The LC Lausanne has a room in Lausanne centre, but LC members goes there only sometimes for their meeting, therefore you should contact them by e-mail to ask for an appointment.

For accommodation, arrival, pick up, tutoring:
accommodation@lclausanne.iaeste.ch

For the IAESTE event program or other events: president@lclausanne.iaeste.ch

For other matters, to find out more about us and to view a list with our members,
please go to: <http://www.iaeste.ch/Members/LCLausanne/>

And now we wish you a very happy stay in Switzerland